

The Nation

Reviews.

MR. STURGE MOORE'S NEW POEMS.

"The Sea is Kind." By T. STURGE MOORE. (Grant Richards. 6s. net.)

ABOUT half the poems in the present volume are reprinted from earlier books; and it was time for something of the kind to be done. "The Vine-Dresser," Mr. Sturge Moore's first collection of poems, is said to be practically unobtainable; but those lucky ones who possess the precious small book may still hug some of their satisfaction, for Mr. Moore has brought considerably less than the whole of its contents into the wider circulation he may now expect for his books. Poetry, however, is eminently a pleasure that should be shared; and no one ever agrees wholly with a poet's own selection from his work. Those who have most enjoyed "The Vine-Dresser" volume will most regret that Mr. Moore has not been more generous in reviving it for others. If it was a question of space, we are not sure that it would not have been better to let the reprinted poems from "The Little School" make room for more from "The Vine-Dresser." Mr. Moore's poetic method does not sort very well with childish moods. The songs of "The Little School" are certainly interesting, and would have to be considered in any conspectus of Mr. Moore's work as a whole; they have, too, many charming touches. The thought is clear-cut and concrete, and yet has an air of whimsy and surprise; and that is as it should be in child-poems. But the music is recondite and strange; they move with a studious, burdened gravity considerably at variance with what they are saying. The best poem in this section of the book is one that has been moved there from "The Vine-Dresser"; and when "The Young Corn in Chorus," addressing the sun, says, most engagingly:—

"The winds, with showers on their backs,
His servants, lounge by distant seas;
And far-seen summits of their packs
Heave up when shifted for their ease;—

we feel that Mr. Moore deals best in childlike conceits when the mood is not too deliberately intentional.

We are not asserting, however, that everything in "The Vine-Dresser" is equally worth preserving; but our own choice, while not quite including Mr. Moore's, would have been more representative even of the book's experimental qualities; it is sufficiently important in modern English poetry for that. We should not, for instance, have been content to reprint only one (though it is the finest) of the highly original blank-verse poems on Biblical subjects. On the other hand, it would not have occurred to us to reprint the rather awkward "Chorus of Greek Girls," with its very un-Greek opening:—

"We maidens are older than most sheep."

But it must be admitted that even such an uncomfortable line as that is really the wrong side of a virtue—and a notable virtue—the virtue of hard, compact, and perfectly sincere phrasing. With humor controlling it (keeping the virtue right side up), it is what is chiefly responsible for the singular cool radiance and fresh flavor of such poems as the epistle "To a Sicilian Vine-Dresser" itself and "An Early Spring Day," as well as for such complete capture of unexpected, imaginative significance as "The Panther." Tempting as it would be, however, to expatiate on the way these earlier poems make novel progress on the great high roads of poetry (and, in spite of the metaphor, that is a rarer thing, and a greater feat, than pushing into the thickets), our business now must be mainly with the new work in this book, and especially with the important poem which gives its title to the collection, "The Sea is Kind."

Mr. Moore has not yet won quite free from his early tendency to awkwardness. And it is not always the reverse

of a virtue. When, for example, in one of his latest poems, he writes:—

"Next, opal-misted bust, flank, loins;
Then all that these to ankles joins;"

he merely seems, in that second line, to have found out an extraordinarily awkward way of saying "legs," prompted simply by external exigencies. But this is an exceptional instance. Anything of the sort we find in "The Sea is Kind" is more wilful, and therefore more interesting. It comes from a desire to make, at almost any cost, the stuff of the poetry as near as may be to concrete, actual experience, and to express it with direct, uncompromising economy and honesty. When a shepherd lad has to tell us that his temperament is a sailor's, he says:—

"I built my hut not sheltered but exposed."

Instead of nicely introspecting his own instincts, he sums up everything that such a process could result in, in a single significant fact, the one thing in his conduct which gives the surest key to his nature. It is such touches as this that makes Mr. Moore's poetry often seem a record of things physically experienced, however fantastic its region may be. The whole passage is worth quoting as a specimen of this poet's way with thought and image:—

"Thou knowest, Menalcas,
I built my hut not sheltered but exposed,
Round, not right-angled.
A separate window like a mouth to breathe,
No matter whence the breeze might blow—
A separate window, like an eye, to watch
From off the headland lawn that prompting wink
Of Ocean musing 'Why,' wherever he
May glimpse me at some pitiable task.
Long sea arms reach behind me, and small hills
Have waded half across the bay in front,
Dividing my horizon many times,
But leaving every wind an open gate."

The baffled sailor-spirit, chained to a landsman's business, is complete in those lines; and it is caught, not in a series of feelings, but in a series of telling facts. That compensates for a certain stiffness and angularity. There is even a trifle of obscurity in the lines about the winking Ocean, which, however, easily turn into a memorable realization of a bit of delicate psychology. Often, too, this compact, downright, yet unexpected style of phrasing has a decided charm; it is rather like Landor, with sensuous pleasure more alert in it:—

"rug-shaped, this willow's shade
Is deep with springy parsley, as bear's coat."

And it serves excellently to show up the moments of a more fluid fancy, which can approach Meleager in sweetness, as when the shepherd has been talking of his sweetheart, and how he has seen the inside of his hut, moon-lit, reflected in her eye, all his treasures, including—

"That bunch of corals pendant from the roof,
Like blood some wounded god shed in salt water . . .
Crowded into a mirror small, round, deep,
And pleased to hold them."

And he goes on—

"Hadst thou the gift, Menalcas,
By peering through the portal of mine eye,
The little double of her perfectness
That there has made a home and glides about,
Would make thee wiser than ever my words shall."

Which is surely a very charming version of an old fancy.

This sweetheart of the sea-fascinated shepherd is certainly not unworthy of his raptures. She is, in fact, a sea-nymph; and she is, artistically, a very successful sea-nymph, one of the most striking successes of her kind in English poetry. We cannot help believing in her physical attractiveness; and Mr. Moore has given her some fine, strange wisdom of a sort appropriate to amphibious female divinity, and has, with convincing intuition, elaborated for her a sea-nymph's "weltanschauung." The youth is, of

course, "nympholept"; though the condition holds him well on the right side of sanity. We leave him, indeed, preparing for a course of very practical sea-faring, for hard-headed trafficking, in order to be able properly to adopt the son the sea-nymph is to bear him. That is characteristic of the poem's spirit. It is a complex, highly imaginative and subtly humanized expression of the lure of the sea, with that visionary Hellas which Mr. Moore knows so well for the lovely setting of the dialogue. But the sea-spell the poem celebrates is not a vaguely romantic thing, not too mystically symbolic. It is eminently actual; it is the spell the sea casts on men not simply to go and sail on it, but to wrest their livelihood from it. The sea-nymph is not at all the sort of person to put up with romantic notions in her lover; what conquers her is the will she finds in him to overcome her element in sheer reality of effort, just as what fascinates him in her is her embodiment of incalculable danger and oceanic wantonness. The nymph's decided personality is, once more, an instance of Mr. Moore's ability to give definite and living form not simply to an idea, but to dramatize all the related qualities and implications of an idea.

It is impossible not to admire what the poem sets out to do, and a great deal of the way it achieves its purpose. We say that it dramatizes an idea; but the dramatization is not merely in terms of persons, human and divine. A crowded wealth of thought and imagery has been amassed, all conspiring to one end—to express in the likeness of clear-cut, concrete vision and experience a single complex, one of the great motives of perennial thought and doing: what it is in the sea that fascinates man, and (according to man's incurable habit of "empathy") what it is in man that fascinates the sea. Incidentally, moreover, the poem moves among the beautiful youths and approachable nymphs, the exquisite seas and pleasant promontories of the Hellas that is still the chief paradise of poetry; whether history would be comfortable there is no great matter. And yet, with characteristics that cannot be exactly rivalled in any poetry that is now being written, it has one very serious fault—it is difficult to read. This is not due to the awkwardness of separate passages so much as to a general awkwardness pervading the whole poem. The form of it is extremely harsh and forced; its logic does not seem a law of organic growth, but something sternly and inconsiderately applied from the outside. The substance of the poem is not fused, but abruptly fitted together. Considerable determination is needed in order to feel it as a whole; and the finest portions seem to suffer as if from a sense that the author had not imparted to them the whole of his reasons for putting them in that particular place, but had kept an important fraction of his intention to himself. Much of the poem is very fine though. The unexpected but—as poetry—very characteristic theophany of the Arabian god in the first part is perhaps the greatest piece of pure imagination in the poem; and it is a splendid grotesque, though harmful to the sequence of the poem, and plainly an excrescence on the whole form. Of more serious quality is the wonderful vision of the battle of Salamis as seen by the nymph seated on the floor of the sea:—

"Then, then, as feathers fall
When osprey attacks heron,
Slain men as slowly,
Though weighted with much armor,
Turned, twirled like down in air."

And there are several passages of melodious philosophy of which this is the most striking:—

"There is a sorcery in well-loved words:
But unintelligible music still
Probes to the buried Titan in the heart,
Whose strength, the vastness of forgotten life,
Suffers but is not dead;
Tune stirs him as no thought of ours or aught
Mere comprehension grasps, can him disquiet."

Altogether, "The Sea is Kind" leaves the reader with the sense of just having missed an extraordinary experience; power of unmistakable vigor and scope seems to be working at some unexplained disadvantage. In separated passages the poem goes almost as high as anything Mr. Moore has done; as a whole, it cannot stand with the best of his work.

With regard to the other new poems in the book, most readers will probably find their intention somewhat over-

shadowed by the larger ambition of the reprinted early poems, though certainly in the later lyrics Mr. Moore has brought to subtler assurance his individual music of thought and language. The poems "To Rabindranath Tagore," "To Giacomo Leopardi," and "A Midnight Ecstasy," may be mentioned as fine examples of characteristic substance mastered by characteristic style.

THE CAPTOR OF DELHI.

"General Sir Alex. Taylor: His Times, His Friends, and His Work." By his Daughter, A. CAMERON TAYLOR. (Williams & Norgate. 2 vols. 25s.)

CERTAINLY, the best thing that could happen both for India and Anglo-Indians would be an Act of Oblivion wiping out all memories of the Mutiny. If only our people would agree to forget that awful year, obliterate all remains of the Lucknow Residency, demolish the Cawnpore Well, and even remove John Nicholson's statue from its position threatening with drawn sword the Kashmir Gate of Delhi; and if, on the other side, the Indians would resolutely renounce the sullen pleasure of dwelling upon their short-lived and desperate success, or upon the bloodthirsty vengeance which massacred them with every form of ignominy after the collapse of their attempt, then, perhaps, at last the two races might draw together with some hope of friendliness and union for the common good. But the tourists, the novelists, the dramatists, and the historians give them no chance. The first thing the visitor to India sets out to see is not the beauty and sweetness of common Indian life, nor even the vast system of Anglo-Indian administration, but that pitiful angel with the marble wings, or a few stones carefully preserved as record of a terrible event nearly sixty years old. As a theme for romance the Mutiny is always ready to the hand of fiction. Here we have another great book on the Mutiny, and in so far as it keeps alive the old saga of wrong, we heartily regret it. Having said that, we have nothing but the highest praise for the book itself. It is an admirable piece of work. There are a few points, perhaps, especially towards the end, which anyone but a daughter would have omitted, just for brevity. But to all who follow the history of India and of the British Army there, it is a work of absorbing interest. There is hardly a distinguished Anglo-Indian soldier of the Victorian age who does not appear in its pages, and men with the greatest names are vividly described and constantly quoted.

Through her father, Miss Taylor enjoyed special advantages. His circle of friends included all the best soldiers of his time, and, no doubt, she knew most of them, or from childhood had listened to stories of their deeds. But that only increases our respect for her own work. The masses of information that have collected round the Mutiny have been carefully sifted and arranged. No professional master of warfare could have written a clearer or more accurate account of the military events, and the personal narrative brings the successive scenes in the drama before us with vivid reality. The book is not so much a biography as a living history of the British Army in India at a time of violent crisis, confronted by a body of men of singularly heroic nature. The two Lawrences, Outram, Havelock, Colin Campbell, Neville Chamberlain, George Chesney, Arthur Lang, John Nicholson, Roberts, Hodson, Hope Grant, Maunsell, Robert Napier, and ever so many more—what an assembly! No doubt it was the crisis that produced them that gave them their chance of showing what their nature was. But, still, it seems strange there were so many of the very best all assembled there; and Alex. Taylor knew them all, and counts in their foremost rank.

He was one of those men whose fame comes to them from something accomplished in comparative youth—some deed which they can never hope to surpass, no matter how long they live. He died about a year ago, fifty-five years after his great achievement. Certainly, he had a busy, and even adventurous, career all through. We find him continually engaged on road-making in India, taking his part in various expeditions and adventures, and finally presiding for many years at Cooper's Hill. But the event of his life was Delhi. He saw much service both before and after. He shared in the assaults at Multan and Lucknow, and it is not often that a man has the luck to play a chief part in three assaults upon

strongly fortified cities. But still, those three months upon the Ridge outside Delhi, and the final assault upon the breaches just east of the Kashmir Gate, were worth all the rest of his life put together, so far as splendor of achievement goes; and he was then only thirty-one!

So Miss Taylor is right in devoting quite a third of her whole book to these three months alone. The present reviewer has read many accounts of that great exploit, and has studied the history upon the spot, both with Indians and British. Yet he has never formed so exact and living a conception of the events as from these brilliant pages, written with such knowledge, accuracy, and arrangement. The skill with which Miss Taylor has mustered all the random information of eye-witnesses, and has constructed from it a convincing account, free from repetition or boredom, is, indeed, masterly. We hardly know where one would find a more intensely moving history of a great episode of war. Except that it did not end in tragic defeat, but in tragic victory, one might compare it with the story of that Athenian army upon the ridge outside Syracuse.

No doubt, Miss Taylor felt that she must here put out her greatest power, for she was reclaiming for her father his due title to honor. The praise given to him in Kaye's "Mutiny," though high, is not at all equal to his deserts in forming and executing the plan for the assault. Kaye gave Taylor the proofs of the book to read, and Taylor modestly pointed out the errors of fact. But either Kaye was indifferent or the proofs could not be altered to that extent, and the injustice remained. Taylor was not a man to raise a fuss over a question of his own glory, but it is pathetic to hear that after some controversy had arisen, he ceased to attend the Delhi dinner; and we wonder how many officers besides Lord Roberts are entitled to attend that dinner now.

It appears to us that these volumes establish Taylor's claim beyond further dispute. Full justice is done to Col. Baird Smith, commanding the Sappers on the Ridge. Evidently he was a splendid soldier—wise, far-seeing, and capable of organization. But for some time before the assault he was disabled by serious illness, so that he could move or work only with difficulty, and directly Delhi was taken he had to be carried away on a cart or litter. Nearly all the active work throughout devolved upon Taylor, second in command, and all evidence goes to show that he had by far the greatest share in devising the plan, reconnoitering the ground, and carrying the whole movement into effect. The testimony of officers who were there appears to leave no doubt about it. Take the words of John Nicholson alone. It is true that Nicholson and Taylor were very close friends. Nicholson, while all too reckless about his own life, was always "pitching into" Taylor for exposing himself so rashly. At the very time when they were together preparing the batteries for the final assault, they would reveal their Scottish-Irish ancestry by earnestly discussing predestination and grace. But a day or two before Nicholson's death, Sir Henry Daly gave the following account of his conversation during a hurried visit to the Ridge:—

"Nicholson was always indignant against wrong or injury, against untruth of any kind, and knowing well the brave part that Alex. Taylor took in the engineering difficulties and triumphs of the siege, and the assault that was victorious at last, he was indignant at the thought that he had not justice done to him, and said: 'Well, if I live through this, I shall let the world know who took Delhi—that Alex. Taylor did it.'"

The greatest loss of the campaign was to happen, and Nicholson did not live through. But still we read:—

"He was aware of the secrecy in which much of Alex. Taylor's preparatory work at Delhi had been necessarily veiled, and was troubled on his death-bed by the thought that this evil might never be withdrawn. 'Remember to tell them that Alex. Taylor took Delhi!'—this was among his last utterances."

There is plenty of other evidence, but for us that is sufficient.

AN IRISH EPIC.

"The Ancient Irish Epic Tale: *Táin bó Cúalnge* (The Cúalnge Cattle Raid)." For the first time done into English by JOSEPH DUNN. (David Nutt. 25s. net.)

FROM the earliest times of which we have any record, Ulster has stood apart in contemptuous isolation from the rest of

Ireland. Long before the racial, political, and religious differences which lie at the root of the modern Ulster problem came into existence, the Ulster problem itself existed. In prehistoric legend, and in medieval as in modern history, we find her disdainfully and persistently declining to consider herself as part and parcel of Ireland as a whole, standing apart as a separate entity, holding her own traditions and creating her own literature. In almost unbroken succession up to the eleventh century, the Northern and Southern Hy Neill, princes of the North, gave rulers to the throne of Tara; until the time of Brian (d. 1015) when the period of Norse influence was on the wane, only one chief of the Southern Provinces laid claim to the overlordship of Ireland. We seldom find the Northern Province joined in friendly alliance with any other part of Ireland; she pursued her policy of isolation through many generations; impartially, as opportunity offered, setting "as great combustion as she could" in Connacht, Leinster, and Munster. To the English mind, regarding matters from a distance, there seemed little difference between the O'Neills and O'Donnells, the Maguires and O'Kanes of the North and the O'Briens and O'Donoghues, the O'Faelans and O'Kellys of the South—all of them alike being regarded as "traitors who ought to be plagued"; but, in their own estimation, the ridge of the world lay between them. Even when, centuries later, the "wild geese," Catholics all of them, took flight from their native land, they did not coalesce abroad any more readily than they did at home. The officers of the South of Ireland, as a general rule, entered the service of France, while those of the North offered their arms to Austria and Spain; thus in foreign regiments and outside the borders of their own land, carrying on the immemorial feud. It would seem that in the hostility between Ulster and the South there is more to be reckoned with than Scottish immigrations or differences in religious and political views entirely account for.

In the ancient epic of the "*Táin bó Cúalnge*," Ireland's chief heroic tale, coming to us from the beginning of the Christian Era, we find this spirit of hostility fully developed. "Ulster against the four great fifths of Ireland" is the note that rings throughout its pages. It is true that the central subject of the epic is but a magnified cattle-raid or *táin*; but cattle-driving, which to-day lingers on deeply embedded in the national mind as a means of retaliation, was in the first century the chief business of life. It belongs to a period when land was plenty, and could be loaned out or had for the asking, but when stock to place upon it was scarce. Agriculture had hardly begun, and the growth of cereals was probably unknown; the country lay open and unenclosed by walls or hedges, and it was possible to drive the chariots straight across the province. The possession of herds was necessary, not only for food and the provisioning of troops, but as a standard of wealth, a proof of position, and a means of exchange. Everything was estimated by its value in kine, three cows or a female slave being a fixed standard of equal value.

The incessant territorial raids which must have made life in Ireland a lively thing in the early centuries of our era, were not usually to acquire land or even to avenge wrongs; they were primarily to increase the supply of cattle. Thus a *motif* that may seem in our day less easy to understand as the subject of a great epic than those which furnished themes for the *Iliad*, or *Parsifal*, or the *Nibelungenlied* in reality arose out of a sense of national necessity, but it was a necessity belonging to a still more archaic and primitive condition of life.

It is only now, in the translation by Professor J. Dunn of Washington University, that we have the whole saga of the "*Táin bó Cúalnge*" according to its longest and, from some points of view, its most literary recension (that of the Book of Leinster), placed before us in English. Many years ago Miss Winifred Faraday gave us a complete translation of the older version, and Dr. Ernst Windisch added a German translation to his scholarly edition of this Book of Leinster text in *Irische Texte*, published in 1905. An outline of the story, with copious extracts, was contributed in 1899 by Mr. Standish Hayes O'Grady to Miss Eleanor Hull's "*Cuchulainn Saga*," founded upon the same recension. The "*Táin bó Cúalnge*" circles round the efforts made by Queen Meave of Connacht to carry off from Ulster its most

treasured possession, the wonderful "Brown Bull" of Cúalnge (a district in Louth), to match it with an equally famous bull owned by herself, "The White-Horned" of Cruachan (Rathcroghan in Roscommon), where she had her palace. The story is in prose, interspersed with lyrics, the favorite literary form of the Irish "Shanachie," and it describes in detail the incitements offered by Meave to the owner of the Brown Bull, the gathering of her hosts, and their march across the northern centre of Ireland, by a route which has been plausibly identified as lying just south of the boundary known to-day as the "Pig's Dyke," into Ulster. On reaching the present district of Down, they strike north and march east of the Bann as far as Dunseverick on the northerly coast, near Portrush, where are still to be seen the remains of an ancient Norman castle, built on the site of the more primitive "dun," before which the hosts of Meave turned to retrace their way. The daily incidents of their course are recounted with extraordinary vividness and spirit, pathos and humor alternating in a way which prevents even the repetition of daily hand-to-hand combats from becoming dull. The pathos of the epic lies in the fact that Ulster is supernaturally smitten at the moment of her greatest peril with an incapacity which leaves the province inert and helpless while her deadliest foes are marching across her borders. Only one champion remains untouched, a stripling of seventeen years, the hero Cúchulain, who, alone and undismayed, faces through an entire winter the forces of Meave until, the spell being broken, the warriors of Ulster arise and drive the invaders, in rout and confusion, back across the Shannon at Athlone.

It is, as Professor Dunn says, "the wildest and most fascinating Saga tale not only of the entire Celtic world, but even of all Western Europe." Its value as history consists in the vivid light it throws upon social conditions and moral standards at a very early period in Ireland, conditions that were probably similar to those encountered by the Romans in Britain, when they came into contact with these islands in the previous century.

Archæologically it is of importance as reproducing for us a civilization actually in being, corresponding to that known as *La Tène* or Late Celtic, which terminated about the beginning of the first century of our era. The tale is probably a highly romanticized version of some actual raid, for no one who has stood upon the raths of Emain Macha near Armagh, where stood the capital of Ulster at the time with which the "Táin bó Cúalnge" deals, or who has noted the exactitude of the topography mentioned in the legends, could doubt that these tales spring out of a basis of real events. From the correspondence between the descriptions of arms and the general conditions of culture in the Táin and those discovered in diggings, as well as from the test of language, we may conclude that the story-tellers who ascribed these occurrences to the first century of our era were not far out of date.

With Professor Dunn's method of work we are not wholly in sympathy. Though adopting the "Book of Leinster" version as the foundation of his text, he adds to it conflated readings from many other sources, some of them belonging to a quite different type of text. The texts of the Táin fall into at least three distinct groups, each group being probably derived from a different archetype, and having a distinct literary flavor. To combine the readings of a single group seems a legitimate plan of work, but we are less in favor of combining the variants from all the different groups. Professor Dunn's plan, however, has the advantage of giving us a good many interesting readings, which he has fitted into his translations.

In the poems he has attempted to retain the form of the original in a prose translation. This appears to us to attempt an impossibility, and we should have preferred a straightforward rendering in rhythmic prose. What is needed is to retain something of the spirit of the original, which it is difficult to accomplish where the line has to be lengthened out to a fixed number of syllables. It is unfortunate that two errors should occur in the printing of the Irish lines chosen by the author for the motto on his title-page, but this is no doubt attributable to the difficulty of supervising from America proofs of work printed in England. The book is handsomely bound, and contains facsimile pages from two of the three vellum manuscripts

in which the tale is preserved, the "Leabhar na h-Uidhri" (c. 1100), and the "Book of Leinster" (c. 1150).

THE LAYMAN'S LIBRARY.

"The Layman's Library." Edited by F. C. BURKITT and Rev. G. E. NEWSOM. "The Faith of the Old Testament." By ALEXANDER NAIRNE, B.D. "What is the Gospel?" By Rev. J. G. SIMPSON, B.D. "Some Alternatives to Jesus Christ." By J. L. JOHNSTON, M.A. (Longmans. 2s. 6d. net per vol.)

WE have heard a good deal lately of the Ecclesia Anglicana. That "zealous African," as Gibbon would have styled him, the Bishop of Zanzibar, has expatiated on the subject in and out of season; and in his preface to this series, which "endeavors faithfully to represent the essentials of the Christian Faith in the spirit of a large and firm churchmanship," Professor Burkitt asks, with the prelate, "How far is the modern Anglican Ecclesia a teaching Church?"

"Is there an 'Anglican touch' that can be felt and recognized, even when the matter in hand has nothing directly to do with the validity of Anglican Orders, or the essential requisites for interdenominational communion? Or is an Anglican merely a person who thinks with Roman Catholics on some questions and with Protestants on others? And—most important of all—what has he to say on the vast and complex array of questions that have arisen since the age of the Caroline divines?"

"The question is worth asking, for if the Anglican, *qua* Anglican, has nothing to say, it means that after all he is only an antiquarian survival."

The line of thought indicated is one to be viewed with distrust. The Anglican Ecclesia is a teaching Church just in so far as it teaches the Christian religion. But no further. The "Anglican touch" of which the professor speaks is one of temper and taste, not of teaching: science and the Gospel are the same for us all. When a Roman Catholic writer tells us that "Catholic Philosophy," or "Catholic Theology," teaches this, that, or the other, the term has a meaning; it denotes a philosophy and a theology which have been elaborated in the course of centuries in the interests of the distinctive tenets of the Roman Catholic Church. The Church of England neither possesses nor requires defences of this sort. She is in the stream and welter of life, not in a backwater: an "Anglican" history, like a "Presbyterian" or "Baptist" arithmetic, is a contradiction in terms.

Again, apologetic is slippery ground; the step between the legitimate and illegitimate is slight, and easily, often unconsciously, taken. "The whole measurement of the chasm which separates them—the Babis—in this respect from early Christianity is visible in the contrast between the Beatitudes, for example, and the fierce early Babi denunciations against all except the true believers," says Mr. Johnston; and he quotes as an example of their attitude a Babi chronicler who records the death of a persecuting Shah in the words: "Soon afterwards His Majesty Mohammed Shah went to Hell." The sentiment is not very Christian, but it compares favorably with Tertullian's famous, "How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs and fancied gods groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness!" And approved theologians inform us gravely that the happiness of the blessed in Heaven is increased by the contemplation of the torture of the lost in Hell. While Canon Simpson's question, "What is the Gospel?" has been answered on more convincing lines by Harnack's "What is Christianity?" ("Das Wesen des Christentums?"); and, in the specific sense of Redemption, by Jowett's famous "Essay on Atonement and Satisfaction" appended to his "Epistles of St. Paul."

Professor Nairne's "Faith of the Old Testament" stands on another level. It is a scientific work of such genuine insight and distinction that one is tempted to regret its appearance in a denominational series. For, indeed, it is able—and more that able—to stand on its own merits; and it loses by association with treatises which, however respectable and well-intentioned, are written from a less detached point of view. The introduction fixes the standpoint:—

"Genesis breathes poetry rather than history; and when we tediously discuss how far it is or is not historical, we lose

our pains and confuse our religious instinct, besides doing injustice to the great religious artists who created this glorious tale."

"Tales had been told of Moses such as had been told before of Babylonian heroes; our author did not disdain their beauty, and, we may be sure, cared not to investigate cold evidence for them. What he could do, he did. The outline of the tale he tells we shall be wise to accept as an outline of facts. Yet surely he reads most truly who drinks in the colors instead of measuring the outline. This is not history, though it be fact. It is religious idealism, a profession of the Hebrews' faith in God's holy purpose being the beginning—as it would be some day realized in the end—of their nation's destiny."

Here is an end of much controversy. Only the poet and the artist can open the closed door of Scripture; the key is in their hands, and must be had from them.

The apt parallel between Babylon and Rome deserves quotation:—

"Babylon was like Rome in this Eastern world. Tradition and prestige were hers, but her masters were a succession of neighbor peoples more vigorous and military than herself. Yet these barbarians, though they spoiled and even destroyed the venerable city, bowed before her name. . . . Egypt was the Hellas rather than the Rome of those days. As we look at the Assyrian sculpture and script, we understand why they won the battles and administered the provinces. As we look at the Egyptian writing, carving, and painting, we seem to discern a subtle difference of moral temperament which accounts for the dislike of the puritan prophets: that plastic art and the solemn calm, as of acquiescence in fate (which again we feel to-day when we enter a gallery of Egyptian antiquities) were suspect to them. 'Religion and politics are a troubled element for art.' Assyria was idolatrous and cruel, yet akin to Israel in blood and even in religion. Neither of them cared for indoor things too much. Neither of them allowed that 'inactive contemplation' which later ages have associated with Oriental races in the lump. Egypt was just 'giant sit-still'; Assyria was 'the staff in the hand of the Lord.'"

This is why the Egyptian belief in the future life was rejected by Israel. It was of the hereafter; the work of Israel was of the now and here.

The use of the Old Testament in Christian worship is a problem. On a recent Sunday evening the "Anglican Ecclesia" read, in Genesis XII., of Abraham's shabby trick upon the Egyptian Pharaoh—a record in which the King certainly comes out better than the patriarch—and sang the malediction psalm, 109. "Let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow" strikes a different note from that of "Love your enemies," and its recitation jars on modern feeling. On the other hand, it is an object-lesson in the progressive character of religion and morality; and Professor Nairne tells us that the mystical interpretation of the psalms was almost certainly current in the synagogue. Their Maccabean date, however, if we accept it, is inconclusive: this period was one of fierce national hatred and uprising against wrong.

RICHARD JEFFERIES.

"Richard Jefferies: Étude d'une Personnalité." Par CLINTON JOSEPH MASSECK. (Paris: Emile Larose. 7 fr. 50.)

MR. MASSECK, M.A., of Harvard, and Docteur de l'Université de Paris, has performed very well the task of presenting Jefferies to the French. The field of research was, he thinks, restricted, and he had little more to do than to co-ordinate the work of Besant and Messrs. Henry S. Salt and Edward Thomas. It was not quite all that was left to do. He might, for example, have brought us nearer to understanding Jefferies's style, the power of its best, the remarkable unevenness between the best and the unspeakably inert and tedious worst. Such investigation would perhaps have handicapped Mr. Masseck in his particular task. Avoiding it, he has produced a close yet readable *résumé* of Jefferies's life and work and of the biographical and critical writings connected with it.

To watch the reception of this book, and, if it ever happens, of Jefferies himself, in France will be highly interesting. Will "The Amateur Poacher," or "After London," or "Amaryllis at the Fair," or "The Story of My Heart," make its way there? Little there is that is French in Jefferies. His vagueness, his incapacity for form, are as un-French as possible. Superficially, he was antipathetic to France. He called Paris the plainest city in Europe. He scoffed at the idea of studying other languages, and especially

French. But he knew very little about French literature. What he knew, as it happens, he admired greatly. In "Amaryllis" he called "Les Misérables" "the masterpiece of all fiction." He refers in the same book to "Pantagruel," and, in fact, he imbibed as much at that fountain filled with wine as such a man could. Maeterlinck he anticipates at several points; but Maeterlinck is not French.

It is fairly certain that, if both "The Amateur Poacher" and "The Story of My Heart," and the books in various degrees of relationship to these, are rejected in France, it will be a matter not of merit, but incompatibility of temper. Both books are intensely English. No book—not "The Complete Angler," not "Selborne," not "Lavengro"—is so completely and intensely English as "The Amateur Poacher," English in locality, in form, and in spirit. Some of its pages are unequalled in their kind. Such is the page where Jefferies and Dickens let slip the hounds after a hare, and

"A faint halloo comes from the shepherds and ploughmen below. It is a beautiful sight to see the hounds bound over the sward; the sinewy back bends like a bow, but a bow that, instead of an arrow, shoots itself; the deep chests drink the air. Is there any moment so joyful in life as the second when the chase begins?"

Mr. Masseck is inclined to regret Jefferies's "lack of liberal education," or at least to excuse some of his undoubted weaknesses on that ground. It is a rash and unnecessary thing to do. Lack of liberal education was one of the conditions that made Jefferies the one man of letters who could write this passage and this book: Gilbert White is a don; Borrow is a romanticist; Mr. Hardy is a philosopher; Mr. Hudson is a scientist and poet. Jefferies, in that earlier period, was as pure a rustic as was compatible with his power of writing sensuous, undecorated English. So, too, when Jefferies was no longer describing, but reflecting, he was strangely in tone with earth, air, and sun, yet strangely individual. Turn to the last page of "The Poacher" that begins "Let us be always out of doors among trees and grass and rain and wind and sun," and ends "a something that the ancients called divine can be found and felt there still." It has in it, as Jefferies said the wind had upon the hills, a scent of sunbeams. He was, of course, something of a reader and student, as well as a rustic; but as he could harmonize sunlight and Grecian statuary, so he subdued his book-knowledge, as if he had resolved never to offend the spirits of earth and air.

In the second half of his career, he both lost and gained. Disease reduced his working power, while he had to provide for a wife and two children and many doctors. Therefore, he wrote far too many "Nature articles" of the kind demanded by the newspapers and magazines. He gained by a great increase in experience and in sensitiveness. Nothing outside of Shelley rivals the purity and ardor of his best later work and the "ecstasy of soul," combined with "delicate excitement of the senses" in "The Story of My Heart," "The Dewy Morn," and half a dozen of the essays. Read the pages where this occurs in "The Story of My Heart":—

"So subtle is the chord of life, that sometimes to watch troops marching in rhythmic order, undulating along the column as the feet are lifted, brings tears to my eyes. Yet could I have in my own heart all the passion, the love, and joy, burning in the breasts that have panted, breathing deeply, since the hour of Iliad, yet still I should desire more. How willingly I would strew the paths of all with flowers; how beautiful a delight to make the world joyous! The song should never be silent, the dance never still, the laugh should sound like water which runs for ever."

You will search in vain, except in the author of "The Revolt of Islam" and "Prometheus Unbound," for a clearer rapture, an ideal less mundane, if not less earthly. Mr. Masseck has left something still to be done by a critical lover of "The Amateur Poacher" and "The Story of My Heart."

SIDE-LIGHTS ON EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS.

"Studies in Foreign Education." With Special Reference to English Problems. By CLOUDESLEY BRERETON, M.A. (Harrap. 5s. net.)

At a time when high authority is challenging the nation to think educationally, the publication of Mr. Cloudeley

Brereton's illuminating appreciations of foreign methods must be regarded as singularly opportune. We have so long been accustomed to believe that our best chance for educational salvation lies in following Teutonic exemplars, that a writer who suggests that lessons no less important are to be learnt through a study of French ideals and practice, is bound to command attention and to stimulate thought by the comparative novelty of his message. Mr. Brereton is remarkably well qualified to play the part of interpreter of the French point of view, and, certainly, the most important chapters in his book go far to show that in seeking for guidance in the maze of our school problems we shall do wisely not to neglect the clues that France can give.

Far and away the most important, as well as the longest, of the papers which go to make up an eminently readable volume is the comparison between French and English secondary schools, which has been rescued from the obscurity of a Board of Education special report. In this comprehensive study French system and English chaos are vividly contrasted. In France, the private school (*école libre*) must at least satisfy the Department that the head-teacher has sufficient academic qualifications, that the text books in use are sound, and the buildings sanitary. The public school (*école d'état*), whether *lycée* or *collège*, is stamped in every part with the Government hall-mark. In England, on the other hand, where there is as yet no law to prevent the most hardened ruffian or the most abject of life's failures from undertaking for a price the responsibility of training the citizens of to-morrow, secondary education is a very welter of anomalies and inconsistencies. Thus we have public schools, which are private preserves; grammar schools, which may specialize in agriculture or business method; academies and colleges, in which culture is mainly conspicuous by its absence; and county schools, which to distinguish from council schools requires an expert's skill.

The truth is that we in England have yet to learn that education is a matter to be taken seriously, and that it is as fundamental and important as any of the national services. The absence of system is partly the cause and partly the result of that lack of interest and indifference which seem likely to prove the greatest hindrance to any far-reaching schemes of reform or reorganization.

In comparing French with English practice Mr. Brereton has skilfully marshalled and discussed the chief problems with which our secondary schools are confronted to-day. Not the least important of these is the question of external examinations, which by general consent are anything but unmixed blessings to our schools, and far too largely dominate curricula. With us the successful examinee is the youth who can pour out the greatest amount of information in a given time, and form and style are of little account. In France external examinations are confined to the older boys and take the form of a composition on one or two set themes, and the written work is invariably supplemented by a *viva voce* test. This is the strict accord with the spirit of a school system whose ideal is "*bien écrire*" and "*bien dire*," in which the mother tongue is the basic subject. The average Englishman is clumsy both with tongue and pen, and the fault may well lie with his schooling.

The personal relations between master and boy are undoubtedly happier in England than in France, and on the side of character formation we have some reason to be proud of the success of our schools, though it must be confessed that from the point of view of effective intellectual culture they display distinct inferiority. Perhaps, however, the most significant fact of all is that the French schoolmaster is regarded in respectable circles as an eligible *parti*. He has definite official and social status, and withal a modest competency and an assured pension at the end of his working days. It is true that there are teachers in England who may amass fortunes, if they have the luck to be offered a house-mastership and can display a pretty skill in doubling the rôle of pedagogue and licensed victualler, and one in 10,000 may one day hope to wear a mitre. But for the majority a mastership in a secondary school is at best a sorry business, the refuge of "second-class gentlemen," in Mr. Benson's bitter phrase, who, far from being eligible as sons-in-laws, are, for the most part, doomed to celibacy or grievous penury.

Most of the remaining chapters of the book are mainly concerned with other aspects of education in France, and

serve to reinforce the line of general argument brought out in the more detailed picture of the French secondary school. They all make good reading, but are of somewhat unequal merit, though the articles on French Rural Education and Moral Instruction in France are full of valuable suggestions, and will repay careful study. Other chapters deal with German practice, and though Mr. Brereton makes no secret of his preferences he at least does fullest justice to the professional skill of the German secondary schoolmaster. The book concludes with a bird's-eye view of education in America, that strange country where millionaires seek in their latter days to save their souls by the lavish endowment of Universities.

There are real psychological and temperamental differences between nations, and in the last resort each must work out its educational salvation in its own way. It is equally true, however, that such comparative studies as Mr. Brereton has given us throw valuable light upon the questions which vex our teachers and administrators in England to-day. It may well be that, as this book suggests, some cure for our educational ills may be found in an antitoxin which is a judicious blend of French culture, German thoroughness, and American generosity.

PROFILISM.

"The Art of Silhouette." By DESMOND COKE. (Secker. 10s. 6d. net.)

WE mean no reflection on the seriousness of its subject when we say that this is an amusing book by an amusing author. For if Mr. Shaw has shown us that it is possible to be serious and witty in the same breath, Mr. Coke demonstrates in this volume that seriousness and comicality do not necessarily clash even when dealing with so innately serious a subject as artistic endeavor. Silhouette, or the art of the profilists, is a serious art, and must be taken seriously; but many of the ideas associated with it and its practitioners were, and are, decidedly funny. To-day the art is mainly associated with professors ensconced in a stuffy cabin on a seaside pier, voluble of speech, and busy with a sheet of black paper and a pair of scissors in snipping out profiles "to the life" at sixpence or a shilling apiece. The profilists of yesterday practised in town, and, for the most part, charged higher prices; but their advertisements and "labels" show that the art of commercial trumpet-blowing was practised at least as assiduously as that of profilism. Over old and new alike, with scissors or without, presides the unconscious humor of the business man. But, while we smile at the artists, we should not forget that much of the older art, apart from the fact that it was not done with scissors at all, has the seriousness of genuine beauty; that even modern profilism, in the wider interpretation, is not only an affair of scissors and black paper on pier heads; and that the practice of the art raises highly serious ethical and moral considerations. For instance, Mr. Coke lays down that it is every man's plain duty to see his profile once, in order that he may adjust the flattering mental conception of himself induced by those photographic and other artists whose fees depend upon their powers of flattery, and who select the full-face view when the profile might hurt its owner's self-esteem. He further charges us with neglect of this duty from cowardice. This is a matter that, in these days of self-examination, cannot lightly be passed by. All financial magnates, especially the very patriotic ones, should see to it at once.

The seriousness of silhouette, so far as this book is concerned, is best summed up in the names of four eighteenth-century practitioners: Miers, Rosenberg, Charles, and Mrs. Beetham. None of these ever touched a pair of scissors. They never patronized the piers. They painted their portraits on card, glass, or plaster in comparatively luxurious studios in aristocratic quarters; and the aristocracy, from George III. (who apparently never tired of reminding himself of his incipient insanity) downwards, sat to them. In style they varied between the austere silhouette, the flat black image without any relief whatever, and the less austere in which some latitude was allowed in the treatment of hair and headgear, dress and ornaments: the accessories, for instance, in many of Mrs. Beetham's profiles are delicately

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but quite decidedly modelled in tones of grey; and their productions were enshrined in beautiful oval frames of pear or other dark wood, each portrait bearing the author's label on its back. Much attention was lavished on the ornamentation of the frame, much ingenuity expended on the coloring of the backgrounds. To this period there succeeded, at the dawn of the nineteenth century, the period of decadence. Somebody imported from the monuments of Ancient Greece an enthusiasm for the severely classic style, and the daintinesses of a Mrs. Beetham grew to be regarded as frivolous and undignified; and, simultaneously, it occurred to a materially minded age of profiteurs that the quickest and cheapest way of producing portraits à la neo-Grec was to cut them out with scissors. Thus the cut-paper method became popular. In the hands of Hervé and Frith, the severity of the dead black surface was softened by the plentiful use of gold tinting, and some of their full-length figures give practically the effect of being modelled in the round in a strong light, thanks to the adroit use of this embellishment. Edouart, on the contrary, was of sterner stuff. He not only practised but preached the gospel of profilistic purity. In his "Treatise of Silhouette Likenesses" (1835) he denounces gilding and other decorative gew-gaws; and, taking himself with abnormal seriousness, made his patrons, who included the French Royal Family, take him at his own valuation. Apart from the amusement afforded by his strutting personality, and some comical incidents of his career, we owe him the very term "silhouette," which, borrowed from Lavater, he was the first to import to this country. He is also memorable as the founder of the modern school of silhouettists—i.e., the pier professors; it is to Edouart rather than any of his greater forerunners that these owe their craft. Royal patronage seems somewhat to have turned his head. But it also brought him other patronage, and we owe especially to him a bunch of Oxford and Cambridge celebrities, including Dr. Buckland. He made a speciality of family groups. These, with their absurd attempts at realistic backgrounds, seem to us an abomination; but they were very popular at the time.

VANITY FAIR.

- "Dodo the Second." By E. F. BENSON. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)
 "Initiation." By ROBERT HUGH BENSON. (Hutchinson. 6s.)
 "Monksbridge." By JOHN AYSKOUGH. (Chatto & Windus. 6s.)
 "London Circus." By HENRY BAERLEIN. (Fisfeld. 6s.)

ALL the world's a stage, peopled generally—said one who was dyspeptic—by fools. It is, however, not necessary, it is misleading, to look at life through the yellow spectacles of biliousness. "Dodo the Second" reveals to its readers a life that is ultra-smart, in doings and in epigrams. We live in a glittering whirl of actions and phrases, all the while that Dodo and her daughter, Nadine Waldenech, are on the stage. Mr. Benson has justified his daring in re-establishing Dodo; but the lady is changed; is, in the phrase of Peter Quince, translated—she has become good; and Dodo on the side of the angels is, indeed, a stained-glass window to meditate about. Fortunately, she brings with her amplitude of wit and humor, and despite her forty-five years, her wild matings, and a grown-up daughter, is not rid of her faculty for irresponsibility. In this sequel, Dodo has divorced her second husband, and meets again him who was to have been number two, and, after twenty years' interval, is destined to be number three—Jack, Lord Chesterford. The dangerous Dorothea is, however, called in to play the heavy mother, for Nadine has inherited her word-power and charm, and is loved, but cannot love in return. She puts aside the obvious right man, and engages herself to a pleasant, clever, lady-like youth, until Nature, assisted by Dodo, intervenes with a storm of waves and thunder, and we know that wedding bells of the proper tune are going to chime. Mr. Benson has given us of his best cleverness in this book; but "Dodo the Second" has its disappointing moments. Some of the episodes, as that of the train-journey of Lady Ayr and family, are mere farce, some of the dialogue is like fireworks which leave hunger unsatisfied behind;

while the ultimate incident of the revolver is forced, unnecessary, untrue; but still there are scenes very delicately and richly painted.

* * *

We pass from the glittering circumstance of smart social life to an atmosphere charged with earnestness. "Initiation" is the finest and most convincing novel Monsignor Benson has given us, and is written with large charity and no parochial spitefulness. It tells of a young baronet finding his vocation, and in so doing realizes a spiritual story which men and women of all divisions in Christendom should be the better for reading. Sir Nevill Fanning is a charming youth, with an instinctive shrinking from ugliness and pain. The sight of a remorselessly realistic *Pietà*, suddenly found in a gorgeous wood by Frascati, shocks him, as it does his companion, a feminine worldling who had caught his ardent admiration. It is a pity that Monsignor Benson has not made Enid Bessington more convincing. She is certainly a highly difficult creature to realize, being at once a vigorous personality and an insane egoist. Even the hand of genius might boggle in the presentment of so baffling a character, and we find it hard to believe that such a worldling, endowed with arts and artfulness, as well as with egregious vanity, would allow so good a "catch" as the splendid young baronet to slip away. The rest is an acceptance of all that duty brings; and spiritually beautiful is the working-out of the theme. "Initiation" will probably do more to cement Monsignor Benson's position among English novelists than any of his earlier works. We must, however, protest against his long drawing-out of the details of the operation and illness.

* * *

"John Ayscough" carries us to the far-away 'sixties, and introduces us to some pleasant and interesting people. Although there proves to be a pill of purpose hidden beneath his fiction, it is agreeably administered. So we find in it no cause for quarrel. "Monksbridge" is enjoyable. There is a family, the Aubersons, consisting of a widow, two daughters, and one son, Peter. Mamma is a pretty nonentity, after the type of Mrs. Copperfield; and leaves affairs to be run by her elder daughter, Sylvia, who, though born but twenty minutes before her twin, who tells the story, is in worldly shrewdness ages older. This highly efficient damsel sets out to improve the circumstances of the family, and soon through address, pertinacity, and the smaller kinds of cleverness, gets herself and the others recognized by the blue-blooded and the wealthy less-than-blue of the neighborhood. Her brother, Peter, is of another type. The world is to him not an opportunity for social endeavor, as it is to his sister; and he threatens to fog the prospects by becoming a Roman Catholic. His lapse is, however, not permitted to spoil the family campaign of fortune, and the end is happy enough. The charm of "Monksbridge" is its geniality and humor. There is a large gallery of characters, all of whom are deftly touched into life. Mr. Ayscough cannot resist poking fun at such representatives of established institutions as a bishop, a headmaster, and other dignitaries, as the admiring call them. It is all, however, so alluring, so gentle, that even those who resent the particular pill it is the design of "Monksbridge" to administer, can take it with grace.

* * *

"London Circus" is curious. Its author is evidently observant, and doubtless those "in the know" will enjoy its passing cleverness. To those not in the know its appeal will be doubtful. Mr. Baerlein has humor and smartness; but it takes more things than those to build a novel. He has evidently made the mistake of basing his characters on living people. He knows them and sees them; but does not enable his less fortunate readers to see them, too. In that respect the book is fatally deficient. Laura, for instance, is supposed to be a housemaid who has cleaned steps; but never for a moment does she talk or act other than in the most refined manner of a gifted suburban. So with Derunje, the Syrian; so with all. Mr. Baerlein's large circle of friends and acquaintances will probably enjoy the book—he himself certainly will; but if he wishes for the favors of the great public, he must begin to study the rules. "London Circus" is phantasmagoria, filled with epigrams that are not quite.

